

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 06421 231148Z
ACTION INR-07

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TAGS: PINR, PINT, NL
SUBJECT: NEW NETHERLANDS FOREIGN MINISTER - VIEWED BY THE PRESS

REF: THE HAGUE 6327

1. REPORTS BY TWO PROMINENT DUTCH JOURNALISTS PROVIDE SOME PERCEPTIVE INSIGHTS INTO CHARACTER AND PHILOSOPHY OF NEW DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER, CHRISTOPH VAN DER KLAAUW.
2. AN SALOMONSON, DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT FOR NRC HANDELSBALD, ON DECEMBER 19 INTERVIEWED THE NEW MINISTER. VAN DER KLAAUW SAID HE PLANNED TO GIVE PRIORITY TREATMENT TO ISSUES INVOLVING EEC. HE NOTED NEED FOR ATTENTION TO NATO "WHERE DECISIONS MUST SOON BE MADE ON NUMBER OF IMPORTANT MATTERS" AND RESPONDED TO QUESTION THAT THESE INCLUDED NEUTRON WEAPON AND DUTCH BRIGADE FOR GERMANY. HE EMPHASIZED HIS EARLIER INVOLVEMENT WITH AND PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND REFUGEE PROBLEMS.

REFERRING TO PROLIFERATION AS "ONE OF THE GREAT DANGERS
THREATENING THE WORLD," HE INDICATED FAMILIARITY WITH PROBLEM
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PAGE 02 THE HA 06421 231148Z

FOR URENCO OF DELIVERY OF ENRICHED URANIUM TO BRAZIL, ADDING
THE MATTER HAS NOT BEEN REOUNDED OFF YET." VAN DER KLAAUW
SAID THAT TRANSITION FROM THE CAREER DIPLOMATIC SERVICE TO THE
POLITICAL POSITION OF FOREIGN MINISTER PRESENTED NO DIFFICULTY,
THOUGH HIS STYLE WOULD DIFFER FROM THAT OF HIS PREDECESSOR.
HE SPOKE CONFIDENTLY OF MANAGING THE FOREIGN POLICY BUREAUCRACY,
INCLUDING INTEGRATION OF CIVIL SERVANTS AND DIPLOMATIC OFFICERS

IN THE MFA.

3. FRANS BLETZ, WRITING IN "HET PAROOL" DECEMBER 20, SAID THAT WITHOUT FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER VAN DER STOEL, VAN DER KLAUW WOULD NOT HAVE BECOME FOREIGN MINISTER. VAN DER KLAUW AND FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER VAN DER STOEL HAD KNOWN EACH OTHER FROM STUDENT DAYS IN HIGH SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY, AND VAN DER STOEL PERSONALLY CHOSE HIM THREE MONTHS AGO AS DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN COOPERATION DESPITE VAN DER KLAUW'S UNFAMILIARITY WITH EEC PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, BLETZ ADDED, NO ONE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF VAN DER KLAUW IF HE HAD NOT BEEN IN THE HAGUE WHEN THE NEW CENTER-RIGHT GOVERNMENT WAS SEARCHING FOR A FOREIGN MINISTER. BLETZ EMPHASIZED THAT HE HAS NO PRACTICAL POLITICAL EXPERIENCE AND IS NOT ONE OF THE "LIONS" OF THE DUTCH DIPLOMATIC SERVICE, SUCH AS DE RANITZ (PARIS) OR HARTOGH (SOON TO RETIRE AS HEAD OF DUTCH MISSION TO NATO) OR BOON (FORMER DUTCH AMB TO ITALY).

4. BLETZ IS SUSPICIOUS OF THE QUALITY OF THE MFA UNDER VAN DER KLAUW, AND FINDS LITTLE MORE THAN HIS PAST CONSERVATISM AS A BASIS TO FORECAST FUTURE POLICIES. "THERE WILL BE NO DRASTIC CHANGE IN FOREIGN POLICY -- THERE IS NO ROOM FOR THAT -- BUT VAN DER KLAUW WILL PLACE A LITTLE LESS EMPHASIS ON THE MAIN POINTS OF VAN DER STOEL'S POLICY -- PEACE, HUMAN RIGHTS (CHILE AND SOUTH AFRICA) AND NON-PROLIFERATION." BLETZ DOUBTS WHETHER THE PROFESSIONALLY SHY VAN DER KLAUW CAN REINTEGRATE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 THE HA 06421 231148Z

HIMSELF IN DUTCH SOCIETY AFTER ELEVEN YEARS ABROAD AND WONDERS HOW WELL HE WILL SURVIVE IN THE POLITICAL ARENA WHERE HE MUST FACE THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S BATTERY OF FOREIGN POLICY EXPERTS. MCCLOSKEY

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